

Living Bread

## Living Bread.

Jn.6:51 I am the living bread which came down out of heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live ~~to~~ forever: yea; and the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world.

Jn.6:57 As the Living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he that eateth me he also shall live because of me.

Jn.6:63 It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life.

The feeding of the 5000 ~~was~~ a miracle that commands our attention most challengingly and strikingly, yet it pales into insignificance when we hear Jesus say, afterwards in the synagogue at Capernaum, Read Jn.6:51, 57.

What bread is to the body, the Lord Jesus Christ is to the soul, to the person who lives in the body.

**I. Bread is an essential article of food.** It is still regarded as the staff of life. As Jesus uses the word it signifies the food necessary ~~for the flesh and bone and blood for our bodies~~ to keep our bodies alive, to maintain them as living organisms. In the same sense Jesus offers himself as the essential food for a living soul. No man possess spiritual life apart from Christ. "Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

**II. Bread is a sacred thing.** That which sustains the life of our bodies commands our most careful respect and consideration. Carlyle walking along with a friend, found a piece of bread in the dirt and picked it up, saying "Ah, this is bread. My mother taught me never to waste bread." Then he proceeded to talk about bread in his own wonderful way.

But if material bread is sacred, representing all the wealth of the physical sphere which nourishes our bodies, how much more sacred is "that meat which endureth unto everlasting life", which ~~the Son~~ Jesus Christ offers to us!

**III. Bread is the gift of God.** God furnishes all the raw

material out of which we make our daily bread. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. Our heavenly bread for spiritual living is also a gift from God. "For

2.

God so loved the world that "he have his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish but have everlasting life". All things, including our bodies and our souls, come from God.

Goodman's story of illustrating that only God can make a boy.

#### IV. The raw food has to be prepared for bread-making.

The grain has to be reaped, threshed, ground into flour and baked in ~~the oven~~ the oven before it becomes bread. In sort of like manner Jesus Christ had to be ground in the mill of most intense spiritual suffering and anguish before he could become food for our souls. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was wounded for our iniquities". It was in token of his preparatory suffering that he broke the bread at the table before giving it to his disciples.

#### V. But before Bread can become a living body or a living soul it must be eaten and assimilated.

Only the food that is actually used allays hunger and builds ~~up~~ a body. It is not enough to look at it, or to admire it, or to believe that it is good bread. It must be eaten and digested and assimilated before it does us any good. Jesus says to each of us, "Take, eat." Believers are partakers of Christ.

We eat our food regularly, every day. The Master taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread". Even, at that, doctors tell us that we eat too much. Better to eat just enough and have it well digested than to eat too much and spoil the whole meal.

I am inclined to believe that we do the same with our spiritual food. We often eat too much spiritual food for one meal, it spoils our digestion of it. We try to understand all about God and the whole of Christ's sayings in relation to the whole of life all at one time.

When Christ tells us, "Whoso eateth my flesh", he means that the eating is to be habitual, a daily process and just enough for our good. We are to gather our heavenly manna day by day. That is the only way we can live our lives- just day by day.

*When we try to live week by week or year by year, we begin with too much and end with too little.*

#### VI. All that we have been saying would be somewhat meaningless and largely a mystery if it were not for what Jesus tells us in the 63rd verse of Chapter 6, "It is the Holy Spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the

3.

The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life."

We need to get beyond the letter and into the spirit of the sayings of Jesus, then we shall not have difficulty in understanding what the Master means.

Henry Ward Beecher, in his sermon, "What is Christ to me?", says, "The way of salvation is the way of heart-faith in Christ. He represents God, and God represents love, and love represents development from sinfulness towards righteousness. And every man is to seek this Christ as interpreting God to us personally for his own sake. The perception of Christ's relation to one's own salvation is a thousand times more important than a perception of his relation to the Old Testament, or to the Godhead, or to theology, or to the history of the church. It is **Christ in you the hope of glory** that the apostle was to preach. You

His personal relation to your wants- to your understanding, to your imagination, to your moral sense, to your yearnings, to your strivings- this is the only point at which you can come to any knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ that shall be available to you."

The Vacaville boy at the university who just had to go home to see his mother.

The girls eager for their letters from home.

It is 'nt the doctrines of Christ, or his example or his teachings, or his influence, or his church that we most need- it is Jesus himself. Is He a personal presence in your life? Is God a living presence in your soul? When you find that you are not with Jesus, do you miss him? Is he your constant companion, your daily pal, or just an occasional visitor, a casual acquaintance of yours?

Is Jesus Christ your daily bread, your soul-need, the satisfying love of your heart?

some hearts melt, soften, relent, yield, give way, begin to flow in the channels of the divine will and love, but other hearts congeal, stiffen, harden, cease their better movements, stand still like a rock.

To the end of his day Paul realized the glory of the blessed Gospel of Christ. To him it ever grew more wonderful. Can we say the same? Do we glory in it more than ever? Do we still regard it as the most wonderful fact in all history? The greatest source of blessing to the whole world? Our own greatest hope for the future, for ourselves and for all mankind?